

The Fruit of Longsuffering/Patience

The study of language can be fascinating! How does a word come into use that is able to portray an idea to our mind? We understand that words are often started from a sound, or something that is common around us, or even taken over from another language. The English language has many words that have been taken over from the Latin or Greek languages. The Greek word "Bapto" originated from a sound that was made when garments were dipped into a pot of dye. If we can trace back to the origination of a term, we can usually gain a better insight with how it is being used. Longsuffering is a word that has this kind of a background¹.

Sometimes we can reverse a word and it seems to give more emphasis to its usage, such as longsuffering or one who suffers long with another or with circumstances. In the Old Testament, the Hebrew for longsuffering is: EREKH HAPPAYIM; which means literally, "long of nose (or breathing)." Since anger is often indicated by a rapid and hard breathing through the nostrils, the origination would have been connected to the appearance of the person in anger— but he did not carry out his anger by outward actions of harm or hurt. Thus, the idea of being "long of anger," or more appropriately, "slow to wrath."

In the New Testament, the Greek for longsuffering is: MAKRO THUMIA; which means literally, "long of mind or soul." The term is translated "longsuffering" or "patient." There is another word in the New Testament that is a synonym to MAKRO THUMIA— HUPOMONE, which literally means, "to remain under." In most instances this word is translated "patience." The idea is that a person is not too quick to act, to punish, or to react to offenses and injuries of others; or, he endures long under hardships, misfortunes, or troubles without giving up or giving in to wrong reactions. This person is determined to see a thing through without giving up and admitting defeat. Observe the following passages with the above in mind:

HUPOMONE:

- Luke 21:19
- Rom 15:4
- Heb 12:1
- Rev 2:3
- Rom 12:12
- Rom 5:3
- Col 1:11 (both Gk words are used)
- James 1:3
 - 1Pet 2:20

MAKROTHUMIA:

- Matt. 18:26, 29
- Eph 4:2
- 1 Cor 13:4
- Acts 26:3 26:3
- Col 3:12

¹ This study was taken from Paul Cantrell, amphillchurch.org/study_books/FRUIT%20OF%20THE%20SPIRIT,%20Bearing%20the.pdf

God is longsuffering with His creatures! His longsuffering shows His goodness, kindness, and forbearance toward those who persist in wickedness—and patiently calls him to repentance rather than to perish (Luke 13:3; 2 Pet. 3:9). As God appeared before Moses on Mt. Sinai, His character is portrayed in these graphic terms: "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." (Exo. 34:6-7). God's longsuffering with sinful man is clearly demonstrated in Genesis chapter six. The condition of men was so bad that there was no longer any hope for or reasons for their continued existence on earth; but, God gave them one hundred and twenty years to change their ways or else. His patience and long suffering came to an end and the great flood came that destroyed mankind from off the face of the earth—with the exception of eight souls! The following passages help to express the longsuffering of God:

- Luke 18:7
- Rom 2:4/ 9:22 18:7

The need for patience or to be willing to endure or suffer long is because we are not alone in this world. We are surrounded with people, things, events, catastrophes, etc., that challenge us. If everything was "sunshine" all the time there would be no need for this fruit of the Spirit. Thus, because of these things, we are challenged to handle these undesirable things with the same spirit with which God handles us—patience or longsuffering. The following Scriptures indicate the areas in which such is called for:

1. With life in General:

- Heb 6:12
- Heb 10:36
- Heb 12:1

2. With General Circumstances beyond our control:

- Phil 4:11

3. With all kinds of afflictions, troubles, and misfortunes:

- James 5:10
- 1Pet 2:20
- 2 Cor 6:4
- Rom 12:12

4. With one another in the body of Christ:

- Eph 4:2

The idea behind the concept of patience and longsuffering is the challenge of having the right attitude in showing such. This attitude is expressed in Col. 1:11-12: "strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of

the saints in the light." It is not enough to endure but endure whatever with joy and thanksgiving! We should be longsuffering towards all people and things or events, but it is critical that we are such to God's people; for by such we show that we are the children of God (John 13:35). God had the Apostle Paul to again say to the Colossians: "Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection." (3:12-14).

http://camphillchurch.org/study_books/FRUIT%20OF%20THE%20SPIRIT,%20Bearing%20the.pdf

My Notes and Thoughts

What current mindset or attitude is hindering me from cultivating love?

What is one new action you are adding to your life to increase your long suffering?

What do you like and not like about patience? _____

What nugget did you get from this session?

Remember fruit needs time to mature and grow, it doesn't happen overnight!

What is the most difficult aspect of patience for you?

Has your lack of patience ever hurt someone close to you? How did you resolve it _____

How do you see these 4 fruit so far working together?
